

and workforce incentives to retain the dedicated core of education professionals who daily shape the hearts and minds of the children of West Texas.

Today we recognize this important and influential group of people. My hat is off to our Texas teachers. And I encourage all Americans to take time on Tuesday to thank our teachers for the great job.

RECOGNIZING CARNEGIE MEDAL FOR NEIL JAY ROSENBERG

HON. JAMES R. LANGEVIN

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 4, 2004

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of the late Mr. Neil Jay Rosenberg, formerly of Westerly, Rhode Island, who will be awarded the Carnegie Medal for his heroism on the morning of July 17, 2002. This year, 19 individuals from throughout the United States and Canada will receive the Carnegie Medal for risking their lives to an extraordinary degree while saving or attempting to save the lives of others. The medal and \$3,500 grant will be presented posthumously to Mr. Rosenberg's father of Brooklyn, New York.

Alerted to a fire in the livingroom of his family's two-story house on July 17, 2002, Mr. Rosenberg quickly evacuated his step father, Robert L. Ingram, who required the use of a wheelchair. He then turned back into the house where his girlfriend, Tara Verrier, and two half sisters, Crystal L. and Carol Ingram, remained on the second floor. Tragically, neither Mr. Rosenberg nor the others survived the fire.

Mr. Speaker, I hope our colleagues will join me in honoring a true hero, Mr. Neil Jay Rosenberg, for sacrificing his life in the hopes of saving others.

HONORING MR. HOTS MICHELS

HON. HENRY J. HYDE

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 4, 2004

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call your attention to Hots Michels, one of Chicago's best liked and most enduring entertainers. During his 50-year musical career, Hots has played for three different Presidents and many famous people including Zsa Zsa Gabor, Abbott and Costello and Bob Hope.

In case you didn't know it, the "piano bar" began in Chicago, where people would gather around a piano and sing away their troubles to a wonderful guy like Hots.

Hots started in the old Sherman House Hotel at Clark and Randolph in Chicago. It was the original piano bar across the street from City Hall where politicians, union leaders and the media gathered. More recently he has been playing at the Chicago Chop House for the last 18 years, entertaining the throngs of individuals visiting the "Windy City."

On May 2, the Chicago Sun-Times featured Hots Michels in an article entitled, "Piano Player to the Stars": Hots Michels." Today, I am pleased to share this article with my colleagues in recognition of Hots, a guy who still knows how to pack them in.

"PIANO PLAYER TO THE STARS": HOTS MICHELS

Strangers in the night are the only people who tip piano player Hots Michels. He's got too many pals.

"I was never a tip guy, mainly because people knew me too well," Hots says. "I'd be in business with them, how could I take a tip? And I wouldn't want to; it would have to be from a stranger."

Hots has a fishbowl on his piano in the Chop House, just in case any strangers drop by.

Hots Michels is the original Chicago piano bar guy. The gang at the bar in the Chicago Chop House busts his chops and calls him "the pianist to the stars!" He has tickled the ivories for the likes of Zsa Zsa Gabor, Abbott and Costello, Bob Hope, Don Rickles, Sidney Poitier, Nat King Cole and Wayne Newton. One night while plunking the 88s at the Sherman House, he saw a face peek through the curtains from the dining room. The face belonged to another piano player who had just retired and was on a book tour. Hots says, "The maitre d' came over to me and said, 'President Truman would like you to join him.'"

He's had pops with three different presidents (Truman, Reagan, Bush I) and said prayers with the Pope. He's been playing piano in saloons for more than 50 years. How old is he? "That's an unpublished number."

He's no teenager but he sure looks good for his age.

Hots started out in Little Flower Parish near 79th and Ashland. How did he get the name "Hots"?

"I have no idea," he says, "It has nothing to do with music."

Did your parents name you Hots? "Hots Michels, yeah." Gotcha.

His dad, Walt, was a musician and songwriter, and Hots must have it in his genes. "I play by ear, I can't read music. I don't know what it was, but anything that had to do with a formal education, I just went south. I have no idea how I really got to play the piano, but hey, thank God."

Chicago Chop House owner John Pontarelli says, "He can probably play 2,000 songs."

The piano bar was born in the old Sherman House Hotel at Clark and Randolph. Hots says, "They had the College Inn, the Porterhouse Room and the Well of the Sea. We had strolling violins at the Porterhouse Room, and in between was a little lounge where people would sit and wait to be called to a table. Someone got the idea, just put a piano in there and entertain 'em while they're in there. Then someone said, well let's build a bar around it. All by accident, it wasn't planned. They did, and it's hard to believe but people would wait in line to sit at the piano bar because it was so new." It's karaoke with class.

The Sherman House was across the street from City Hall. Pals would wander over for a couple of carnables along with union leaders and media folk, and most of them became friends with Hots over the years. Along the way he was involved in a multitude of schemes.

"Piano was never enough for me. I was involved in other things all my life. I had a small loan business, used cars, Christmas trees, launched a new lipstick, bubble bath, radio stations in Alaska, Mill Run Playhouse, video games. I had a detective agency. We were in the slot machine business, drilled oil three times in my life, had a burial vault company in Melrose Park, and on and on and on."

Hots and his friend Hal White raised championship hogs in their backyard in Beverly and entered them in an international livestock show. "We took grand champion of the show."

On the wall next to his piano is a picture of the two city slickers crossing the Rock Island Line tracks with their two prize pigs, Lightgreen and Coolbreeze.

Hots used to wear a turban at the piano when he was doing his act, "The Musical Wizard of Mental Telepathy." Folks would conceal the name of a song on a piece of paper and Hots would tear it up and play it for them on the piano. The gang at the Chop House says, "Carnac stole his act!"

He's been playing from 5 to 8 p.m. every weekday at the Chop House for the last 18 years. The joint is drenched in Chicago history with thousands of photos of the toddling town's sinners and saints, including Sally Rand sitting nude on a horse, a gallery of gangsters and every mayor in the history of the city. Grab a stool at the piano bar and request a tune from Hots. If you feel like singing, he'll be your accompanist. I ask him what's the most requested song and he says, "As Time Goes By," requested by the young and the old. "It's still the same old story."

If you're lucky, Joe Sullivan might stop by to do some crooning at the bar. Hots says, "He owns Clark & Barlow Hardware, but Joe could have easily made it in show business. He brings down the house." I've watched Pete Nolan warble here with hand moves and phrasing that rival Sinatra's.

It's not just the music that draws you to Hots' piano. There's a camaraderie among those half-dozen stools as we listen to him play his favorites. One night Charlie Carey and I were chillin' with Hots, and Charlie mentioned that he was on his way to Washington, D.C. Hots picked up the phone next to his piano, called his best friend, U.S. Rep. Henry Hyde, and handed Charlie the phone. Lobbyists charge heavily for that kind of clout, but Hots was just putting two pals together.

After a half century of playing piano in saloons and more than a few cockeyed business schemes, Hots tells me, "I have no beefs."

He's been around long enough to know that only suckers beef.

CONGRATULATIONS TO GIRL SCOUTS ON THEIR 92ND BIRTHDAY

HON. BOB FILNER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 4, 2004

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker and colleagues, I rise today to honor an American icon and an organization that we all know well, Girl Scouts of the USA. This year, Girl Scouts is celebrating 92 years of service to our communities and our nation. For 92 years, Girl Scouting has made a remarkable difference in the lives of girls in so many ways.

The Girl Scouts is an organization that has always been ahead of its time, and the experiences that girls have in Girl Scouting today are profound. For example, they travel the world, learn about science, math and engineering by working with some of the most innovative thinkers in these fields, and perform community service projects that are literally changing many of our communities for the better.

In March, I had the opportunity to meet with Girl Scout representatives from my district who came to Washington, D.C. with nearly 600 other Girl Scout executives, professional staff and volunteers from across the nation. The